

STATE OF MONTANA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**APPLICATION FOR FULL CERTIFICATION AS A  
MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL PERSON**

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**PRIVILEGES AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL CERTIFICATION**

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**A. Privileges**

A professional person with full mental health certification is qualified to:

- (a) approve applications for voluntary admissions to mental health facilities;
- (b) participate as a mental health professional person in involuntary commitments and recommitments to mental health facilities;
- (c) concur in the emergency detention of a person believed to be seriously mentally ill;
- (d) supervise treatment plans of inpatients;
- (e) Authorize restrictions of patients' rights when such restrictions are necessary to achieve treatment goals;
- (f) authorize restraint or isolation;
- (g) supervise non-professional staff;
- (h) order the discharge of a patient during, or at the end of, the initial commitment period;
- (i) request a court-ordered release to alternative treatment;
- (j) request a conditional release from a mental health facility;
- (k) request the readmission of a conditionally released patient;
- (l) review and initial, with 24 hours, summaries of extraordinary incidents involving patients;
- (m) supervise approved training programs and clinical competency evaluations for facility mental health certification.

**B. Minimum Requirements**

Applicants for full mental health certification must demonstrate successful performance as mental health clinicians, a thorough understanding of the statutory responsibilities of a mental health professional person and knowledge of the full range of mental health services in Montana. In addition, to obtain full mental health certification a person must:

- (a) have earned a doctoral degree from an accredited college or university in a field of study which is clearly identified as preparing the student for the clinical treatment of mental illness and have at least six months of full-time clinical mental health experience following receipt of the doctoral degree; or
- (b) have earned a master's degree in social work from an accredited college or university in a curriculum which included at least three courses in therapeutic techniques for treating mental illness and have at least one year of full-time clinical mental health experience following receipt of the master's degree; or
- (c) have earned a master's degree in clinical or counseling psychology from an accredited college or university and have at least one year of full-time clinical mental health experience following receipt of the master's degree; or
- (d) have earned a master's degree in psychiatric nursing from an accredited college or university and have at least one year of full-time clinical mental health experience following receipt of the master's degree; or
- (e) have earned a master's degree in a human services field other than social work, clinical psychology, counseling psychology or psychiatric nursing from an accredited college or university in a curriculum with a *preponderance* of course work and practicum experience in a clinical mental health area and have at least two years of full-time clinical mental health experience following receipt of the master's degree; or
- (f) be a registered nurse with a bachelor's degree in nursing from an accredited college or university and have five years of full-time clinical mental health experience following receipt of the bachelor's degree.

Applicants with a master's degree in a field which is relevant to some aspect of treatment of mental illness and who have at least 5 years of full-time clinical mental health experience *may* be granted full mental health certification based upon a special review by the certification committee of the individual's clinical mental health experience and letters of reference. Such applicants must demonstrate a degree of competence and knowledge which is, in the opinion of the certification committee, equivalent to that of individuals with the training and experience listed above.